

FORVM FOR RURAL MARYLAND

Maryland's Rural Development Council

THE ANNUAL REPORT

Fiscal Year 2002

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Chairman's Message:

A successful year passes; a busy one looms ahead

The Honorable William F. Eckman, Mayor, Town of La Plata

It is not always easy to explain what The FORVM does exactly. We're different. Unique, even. Unlike most government agencies, we don't provide direct services to citizens. We don't deliver the mail or collect garbage or police the streets. Neither do we make laws or regulate industries.

The FORVM in fact can't, and is not designed to, accomplish anything by sitting isolated and alone in its offices in downtown Baltimore.

Instead, The FORVM proactively builds partnerships throughout the state. It is what we must do in order to achieve our mission, which is to identify problems and issues affecting rural communities and to develop policy and programmatic changes that address them.

We cannot mandate change, of course, but the Governor and General Assembly (which can mandate change) created us a few years ago and clearly articulated its expectation that we would develop and recommend thoughtful, studied solutions to complex rural concerns. Even after we meet that expectation and research solutions, we must continue to rely on our partners in the State House and state government, as well as many federal and local agencies, to work with us, to come to the table and help us frame, write and rewrite, and eventually adopt policies and make budget decisions that ultimately improve the quality of life in Rural Maryland.

About 75 percent of Maryland residents live in the corridor between Baltimore and Washington, D.C. These areas have the largest representation and the most resources in the state, and of course, they confront substantial issues affecting almost four million people.



Chairman's Message continued on page 2



About The FORVM!

The FORVM for Rural Maryland, the state's rural development council and an independent state agency, is the only state entity dedicated exclusively to addressing the policy concerns that impact *rural* Maryland.

With a full-time staff of just three people, the FORVM's activities are guided by a 38-member executive board and about 250 volunteer members, many of whom participate on our Working Committees.

Our purpose is to bring people together from all segments of the community and government to identify and address problems that significantly impact Rural Maryland. We work closely with State and federal agencies, the Maryland General Assembly, and local elected and appointed leaders, as well as nonprofit organizations, for-profit businesses, and academic institutions to develop policies and programs that have attainable and sustainable results. We provide a venue for our stakeholders to cross traditional boundaries, share information and, with one strong collective voice, address rural Maryland's special needs. We are nonpartisan and nondiscriminatory and always work hard to make decisions by reaching consensus.

Financial resources are provided primarily by the State of Maryland, and through the National Rural Development Partnership (NRDP), a collaborative program of the U.S. Department of Agriculture and other federal agencies.

Continued: Chairman's Message, from page 1

The FORVM was designed to make sure the other 25 percent — the other 1.4 million Marylanders who do not live in those urban and suburban counties — still maintain an effective voice in state government, still have a place to go to have their concerns heard and considered.

Rural communities in the Appalachian Mountains of Western Maryland and the more remote counties on the Eastern Shore and Southern Maryland compete for human and financial resources alongside some of the most affluent and best educated communities in the United States. Without the FORVM and its many partners, rural communities would be at a great risk of being lost in the crowd. By bringing together rural leaders from around the state, the FORVM is able to provide a collective voice for Rural Maryland, one with a certain amount of focus and clout it might not otherwise have. Rural Maryland's 18 counties, 100-plus municipalities and scores of unincorporated hamlets, indeed, have an agency that hears and represents their unique concerns.

In this Annual Report, you will read about the activities The FORVM was engaged in during the last year. Some efforts we initiated. Some we joined. Some are multi-year efforts. All required teamwork and consensus building. You will also read about the tremendous challenges that still face Rural Maryland. With a full-time staff of only three people, the FORVM relies on rural stakeholders throughout Maryland — from mayors to county commissioners, from farmers to doctors, from nonprofit advocates to private businesspeople — to join our Working Committees, brainstorm ideas and actively participate in identifying common problems and reaching a consensus on concrete, workable solutions to present to policymakers and lawmakers.

As you read through this report, I hope you will become interested not only in The FORVM, but in *rural* Mary-

land. I hope, too, that you will remember that The FORVM's doors are always open to you. I invite you to join us and work with us, elbow to elbow, as we continue to make rural Maryland a better place to live and work.

Finally, my biggest personal objective for the coming year is to add members to the FORVM roster and increase participation in FORVM activities. We need the active involvement of people from across the state: farmers, doctors, county commissioners, teachers, nonprofit organization leaders, housewives, local agency directors, small businessmen, and, yes, even small town mayors (like me).

During the last few years, we have successfully laid a foundation that has established a solid framework for our future. We have a Board and a committee structure in place that is ready to respond to the needs of rural citizens. All we need now is for you to join us in our collective effort to improve the quality of life in rural Maryland. Because together, we **can** accomplish more than you can imagine!

Mayor Eckman is serving his fourth term as chair of the FORVM Executive Board. He has served 19 years as mayor of the Town of La Plata and 12 years as a council member. He has also served as president of the Maryland Municipal League and the Maryland Rural Water Association. He retired after 31 years with A. T. & T. He has since founded his own independent fire protection consulting firm, which takes advantage of his twenty-five years experience in the volunteer fire service.



The Members of the Executive Board of the FORVM for Rural Maryland 2002



■ **Representing District 1** (Garrett, Allegany & Washington)

Duane Yoder, President, Garrett County Community Action Committee

■ **Representing District 2** (Frederick and Carroll)

Edmund R. Ned Cueman, Planning Consultant, Mason/Dixon Circuit Rider

■ **Representing District 3** (Charles, Calvert and St. Mary s)

William F. Eckman, Mayor, Town of La Plata (FORVM Chair)

■ **Representing District 4** (Cecil and Harford)

John Bunnell, Mayor, Town of Cecilton

■ **Representing District 5** (Kent, Caroline, Queen Anne s and Talbot)

Jack M. Canan, Housing and Community Development Coordinator, Kent County

■ **Representing District 6** (Dorchester, Wicomico, Worcester & Somerset)

Don William Bradley, Mayor, Town of Hurlock

■ **Representing District 7** (Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Howard, Montgomery, and Prince George s)

Dr. Nan Booth, Community Developer (FORVM Second Vice-Chair)

■ **Representing the State At-Large:**

William Daniel Mayer, Charles County Commissioner

■ **Representing Nonprofit Organizations:**

R. Kevin Brooks, Executive Director, Maryland Rural Development Corporation

■ **Representing For Profit Organizations:**

Robert Agee, Vice President, Chaney Enterprises, c/o Campbell Sand and Gravel

■ **Representing Governor Parris N. Glendening:**

Hagner R. Mister, Secretary, Maryland Department of Agriculture

■ **Representing the FORVM for Rural Maryland Foundation:**

Mary Mallery, President, FORVM Foundation

■ **Representing the Maryland State Senate:**

The Honorable Thomas McLain Middleton
The Honorable Alexander X. Mooney
The Honorable J. Lowell Stoltzfus

■ **Representing the Maryland House of Delegates:**

The Honorable K. Bennett Bozman
The Honorable Louise V. Snodgrass
The Honorable John F. Wood, Jr.

■ **Representing the Maryland Rural Health Association:**

Annie K. Kronk, private citizen

■ **Representing the Maryland Municipal League:**

Henry C. Heine, Jr., Mayor, City of Taneytown
Linda Chelton, Town Administrator, Town of Berlin

■ **Representing the Maryland Association of Counties:**

Frederick Holliday, Garrett County Commissioner;
Phyllis E. Kilby, Cecil County Commissioner

■ **Representing the Maryland Farm Bureau, Inc.:**

Stephen Weber, President

■ **Representing the Maryland Association of Community Action Agencies:**

Dave Jordan, Executive Director, Washington County Community Action Council

■ **Representing the Maryland Association of Public Library Administrators:**

Sharan D. Marshall, Director, Southern Maryland Regional Library Association, Inc.

■ **Representing the Maryland Downtown Development Association:**

Doug Mathias, private citizen

■ **Representing the Director of the Maryland Cooperative Extension:**

Bonnie Braun, Ph.D., University of Maryland at College Park

■ **Representing the Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland:**

David Jenkins, Executive Director

■ **Representing Tri-County Council for Western Maryland:**

Leanne Mazer, Executive Director

■ **Representing Tri-County Council for the Lower Eastern Shore:**

Mike Pennington, Executive Director

■ **Representing the Southern Maryland Resource, Conservation and Development Council:**

Mark Rose, RC & D Coordinator

■ **Representing Western Maryland Resource, Conservation and Development Council:**

Timothy W. Hann, RC & D Coordinator

■ **Representing the Eastern Shore Resource, Conservation and Development Council:**

Dave Wilson, RC & D Coordinator

■ **Representing the Mid-Shore Regional Council:**

Kevin Morse, Executive Director

■ **Representing the Delmarva Advisory Council:**

Dale Maginnis, Director

■ **Representing the Federal Government:**

Marlene Elliott, State Director, Delaware and Maryland, USDA Rural Development



“A Collective Voice for Rural Maryland”

The FORVM for Rural Maryland, as an independent state agency, is governed by a 38-member Executive Board. The Board is composed of representatives from regional areas of the state, from a variety of policy-specific public and private organizations, from rural-based organizations, and from an intergovernmental mix of federal, state, and local governments.

The FORVM believes that its strength comes from the diversity and cross-collaboration of its Board and Committee representatives. We provide a neutral forum where all perspectives can be heard. This has created a platform for a rural policy discussion unlike any other in Maryland. Therefore, the FORVM is proud to truly serve as “A collective voice for Rural Maryland”!



Stephen R. McHenry
Executive Director

Mr. McHenry, a lifelong Marylander, has been with the FORVM since 1998. He is the immediate past chair of the Microenterprise Council of Maryland, which was created by the FORVM and several other entities interested in promoting community economic development. He also serves as chair of the Partners for Rural America, a national nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting collaborative rural development efforts. He is a graduate of both "LEAD Maryland" (the agricultural and rural leadership program) and "Leadership Maryland".

The Executive Director's Report

As this unique organization grows and becomes more well known in rural communities and in government circles, our workload increases and so too does our effectiveness. The perennial challenge for us is to keep all the "balls in the air", with our small (but dedicated) staff and limited budget. And of course, our great volunteers from the Executive Board and the working committees provide both leadership and additional resources that help make this partnership work.

At the National level, the work of the **National Rural Development Partnership**, and its component state rural development councils, received formal federal recognition in the omnibus "Farm Bill" that the U.S. Congress passed into law late last Spring. We appreciate the fine efforts of Maryland Senators Paul Sarbanes and Barbara Mikulski, and Representatives Roscoe Bartlett and Wayne Gilchrest, in co-sponsoring the freestanding legislation the year before that lead directly to this positive Farm Bill inclusion. Going forward, this action should result not only in new resources being brought to bear on rural concerns, but more effective coordination among the federal various agencies, and better collaboration between the federal government and the state and local governments regarding rural policy and programmatic issues.

Closer to home during the past year, The FORVM was involved in several initiatives that we believe will be helpful to the long-term sustainability of rural communities. For instance:

Small Community Wastewater Infrastructure Issues, was an area that the FORVM has focused much attention on in recent months. The FORVM's Infrastructure Working Committee previously identified the wastewater system inflow and infiltration (I&I) problem manifest in most older systems as the number one infrastructure problem facing smaller communities in Maryland. The FORVM took this concern to the Governor's Task Force on Upgrading Sewerage Facilities last fall, and experienced some success in terms of the content in its final report. Later, during the 2002 General Assembly Session, working with the Rural Delegations and MML, significant progress was made and legislation was enacted to address this concern. (See page 9 for more details.)

The Resource-Based Industry Task Force, established by the General Assembly in 2000 as a result of work done by the FORVM's Working Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources, studied the feasibility of creating a central financing authority for agriculture and resource-based industries, which provide the backbone of Maryland's rural economies. FORVM has been pleased to provide technical and other assistance to the work this task force, which has been very ably lead Co-Chairs Senator Mac Middleton and Delegate Charles McClenahan. The Task Force completed its work in January, and recommended the establishment of a new Task Force on Resource Industry Business Development, to work on new issues that were identified, and to involve more rural stakeholders in the discussion. (See page 9 for more details.)

The General Assembly created two new regional planning and development councils on Maryland's Eastern Shore during the 2001 legislative session. The FORVM strongly supported the creation of these councils, which will make the Eastern Shore eligible for significant federal funding, among other good things. During the balance of 2001, and continuing on to the present, we have provided support to Eastern Shore Delegation and the new council governing bodies to help get these councils fully operational. I am pleased to report that each of the councils have hired very well qualified individuals to serve as their executive directors, and both are off to a strong start. (See page 5 for more information.)

Although **The Maryland Agricultural Educational and Rural Development Assistance Fund Act** is in just its second year of existence, already 19 rural-serving nonprofit organizations and community colleges have shared in 31 grant awards totaling \$705,000. This fund was created especially to meet the special needs of rural-serving nonprofit organizations. The FORVM strongly supported the establishment of the MAE&RDAF program, and we are pleased to continue coordinating the application and selection process. Thanks also goes to our partners with the Department of Business and Economic Development, the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Housing and Community Development, and the Department of Natural Resources which help select and administer the grants.

As more and more needs in our rural communities become apparent, the more we try to find new and innovative ways to address them. To do that, we need your help and your involvement. We invite you to join us, participate in one of our committees, attend our Annual Rural Summit and partner with us to ensure the long-term sustainability of rural communities. By working together we truly are a collective voice for Rural Maryland.

The FORVM's Year In Review

BROADBAND TELECOMMUNICATIONS ACCESS

Access to broadband telecommunications service is vital to local economic development efforts. The FORVM has been working with the **Maryland Technology Development Corporation** (TEDCo) on the release of findings from a major "eReadiness Assessment" of the State's telecommunications infrastructure. The FORVM is coordinating with TEDCo and the four rural regional councils to organize roll-out events that will show government and business leaders in each region of the state the status of its telecommunications infrastructure and where the gaps are. TEDCo also plans to unveil its statewide Household and Business Survey findings at the 2002 Maryland Rural Summit. The FORVM is also working with the **Net.work.Maryland** Advisory Board on its efforts to roll out a public sector interLATA internet access program. Look for a kick-off event to be held this fall.

RURAL REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT COUNCILS

One of the FORVM's primary goals is to ensure that there is regional cooperation on a range of public issues. Toward that end, The FORVM for Rural Maryland has been actively supporting the rural regional planning and development councils during the past year.

Two new Regional Planning and Development Councils were founded in 2001 in response to recommendations made in the Governor's Eastern Shore Economic Development Task Force Report. The FORVM played an integral role in the creation and development of the upstart organizations as they look to improve the regional growth of this traditionally rural and economically challenged area. A brief summary of the organizational development and first year accomplishments for each of the Eastern Shore Regional Council follows:

- **THE MID-SHORE REGIONAL COUNCIL** serves as a cooperative economic development and planning agency within the area consisting of Caroline, Dorchester and Talbot Counties. To provide project recommendations and policy advice, the Council created five Committees specializing in Wastewater Management, Geographical Information Systems (GIS), Transportation, Information Technology, and Emergency Management. As a result of the Council's Committee recommendations, the Council is nearing completion of its first Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). Adoption of a CEDS by the concerned counties will make them eligible for EDA funding. The Council plans to conduct a regional wastewater assessment that will identify and prioritize capacity, treatment, and regulatory needs in the region. Together with the Tri-County Council for the Lower Eastern Shore of Maryland, the Council has developed a RFP to develop a business model for regional broadband infrastructure.
- **THE TRI-COUNTY COUNCIL FOR THE LOWER EASTERN SHORE**, like its sister Council to the north, was formed to facilitate regional planning and development in Somerset, Wicomico, and Worcester Counties. The Council recently established five committees: Water and Sewer; Geographic Information Systems (GIS), Telecommunications, Regional Health Care, and Workforce Development. One of the primary goals of the Council is to have the region designated as an Economic Development District (EDD) by the EDA of the US Department of Commerce which will make this region eligible to receive EDA funding. The Council is also in the process of completing its CEDS - the first step in the EDD process.

Continue to page 8 please

The FORVM for Rural Maryland

Working Committees

Agriculture & Natural Resources

Chair - Phylis Kilby

Commissioner, Cecil County
This Committee works to improve the general well-being of Maryland's rural residents through profitable farm operations and sustainable utilization of natural resources. Issue areas have included farming, fisheries, forestry and mineral extraction.

Infrastructure

Chair - Don W. Bradley

Mayor, Town of Hurlock

This Committee considers the infrastructure needs of rural communities and focuses on such issues as transportation, water, wastewater, and solid waste.

Housing & Community Development

Chair - Duane Yoder

President, Garrett County
Community Action Agency
This Committee promotes studied solutions that help overcome housing and other barriers in Rural Maryland communities.

Health Care

Chair - Annie K. Kronk

Rural Health Advocate

This Committee works to enhance the availability of adequate and affordable health care in Rural Maryland in the new managed care environment.

**4th Annual
2001 Maryland
Rural Summit
October 25-26, 2001**

The 2001 Maryland Rural Summit was held at the Rocky Gap Lodge and Golf Resort located in rural Allegany County.

2001 Rural Award Winners

Outstanding Legislator(s) of the Year

Delegate Norman Conway and
Delegate Charles McClenahan

Outstanding Rural Community Development Program

Shore Transit

Outstanding Rural Economic Development Program

City of Taneytown

Outstanding Rural Health Practitioner

Thomas S. Sisca,
Pharm. D., FCCP, BCPS

Outstanding Rural Health Achievement

Garrett County Partnership
for Children and Families,
Inc.

Outstanding Rural Health Program

Healthy Families, Garrett
County

4th Annual

2001 Maryland Rural Summit

The Maryland Rural Summit is an important event for rural Marylanders. Held only once a year, it is the only time when rural-specific issues are heard by the State's top officials, agency administrators, and local leaders. Past Summits have brought together many rural leaders from all across the State and from across a wide range of interests.

The 2001 Summit was no different. With twenty speakers, thirteen workshops, and twenty-five exhibitors on hand for two days of activities, food, and networking, it is no surprise that this year's attendance shattered the previous record. The Summit provided over 200 participants with an atmosphere unmatched anywhere in Maryland when it comes to rural development policy and planning. The Maryland Rural Summit is sponsored annually by the FORVM for Rural Maryland, the Maryland Rural Health Association, and the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene - Office of Primary Care and Rural Health.

Here are some of this year's Summit highlights.



Renee Winsky, Deputy Executive Director of the Maryland Technology Development Corporation (TEDCo) informs rural Marylanders about the statewide eReadiness Assessment.



Summit participants representing a wide variety of rural-serving organizations and government agencies are pictured here during a plenary session.



Executive Director, Mikal McCartney, of the Microenterprise Council of Maryland addresses Summit workshop participants.

Dr. Bonnie Braun, an Extension Family Life Specialist with the University of Maryland, responds to questions about the results of her study of Rural Maryland families.



The FORVM's Year In Review

4th Annual 2001 Maryland Rural Summit Town Hall Meeting

Several legislators attended this year's Summit and joined House Speaker Cas Taylor in a State-wide Rural Town Hall Meeting, answering questions from participants and sharing in a two-way dialogue. The Town Hall Meeting is one of the few times that rural Marylanders can voice their concerns, be heard, and be answered by some of the state's legislative leaders.



(Above, from left) Speaker Casper Taylor, Senator Mac Middleton, Delegates Louise Snodgrass and Norm Conway take questions at annual Rural Town Hall Meeting .

4th Annual 2001 Maryland Rural Summit Rural Awards Dinner

Five rural programs and two rural legislators were recognized for their outstanding efforts in trying to achieve a better rural Maryland at the annual Rural Awards Dinner. Individuals and organizations from throughout the state were nominated for rural development awards in six different categories and the winners were announced during the dinner. Below are some of this year's winners. **To see all of the 2001 Rural Awards winners - go to page 6.**

(from left) Del. Norm Conway, Sen. Mac Middleton, Del. Charles McClenahan, MRHA's Jake Frego, and the FORVM's Bill Eckman present Outstanding Rural Community Development Award to Shore Transit.



(from left) Sen. Mac Middleton, MRHA's Jake Frego, and the FORVM's Bill Eckman present Outstanding Rural Health Program Award to Healthy Families, Garrett County.

2001 Summit Plenary Session

"RURAL FAMILIES"

Dr. Bonnie Braun, an Extension Family Life Specialist with the University of Maryland's Department of Family Studies was a Plenary Session speaker at the **2001 Maryland Rural Summit**. She presented the preliminary results of a ground-breaking multi-state, longitudinal study she has conducted since 1998. The study focuses on the well-being of rural low-income families across the country since the passage of the Welfare Reform Act in 1996.

In 1998, 422 families in fifteen states provided information about their lives in a number of areas. Among those interviewed were thirty-five families in Dorchester and Garrett Counties in Rural Maryland. Both counties consistently rank at or near the bottom in socio-economic indicators and are considered to be economically "distressed" by the State of Maryland.

Dr. Braun stated that "the family is the basic unit of an economy and democracy...when families are stable your [community] is stable." In Rural Maryland, however, families are not as stable as they should be according to Dr. Braun. She reported that "many of Maryland's rural mothers work two and three jobs to make ends meet but still live at or near the poverty level, this is because most of them work in the service sector - the poorest paying with few or no benefits."

She said the results of this study will help policy-makers make more informed decisions when working with rural communities. If you would like more information please contact Dr. Bonnie Braun directly. Her email is **bb157@umail.umd.edu**



Microenterprise Council of Maryland (MCM) launched their web service portal recently! MCM has made the vision of an electronic storefront, or portal, for microenterprise in Maryland a reality. A portal site provides a single point of entry for microenterprise development organizations, the microenterprise industry and microentrepreneurs. *Emicromaryland.com* offers resources and services such as MCM information/contacts, frequently asked questions, service providers, events, success stories, helpful links and more! Future features will include internet training and the emicro cybermart, a micro-business marketplace.

To visit the web portal **www.emicromaryland.com**, you can link to it through the FORVM's "Links & Resources" page on the FORVM website. Just click on "**Microenterprise Council of Maryland**".

The Microenterprise Council of Maryland (MCM) began as a FORVM working committee four years ago and has since become a separate nonprofit organization. The FORVM still maintains a leadership role on the MCM Board, staffed the MCM until the appointment of the Executive Director Mikal McCartney and helped the MCM organize its first Annual Meeting.

The FORVM will continue to support the council's efforts to promote very small business development throughout the state and remains committed to supporting entrepreneurial activity.

The FORVM's Year In Review

While the FORVM was busy helping to start up the regional councils on the Eastern Shore, the two long-established rural regional councils were active in 2002.

- **THE TRI-COUNTY COUNCIL FOR WESTERN MARYLAND**, founded in 1971, is a nonprofit corporation chartered to serve Maryland's western counties (Allegany, Garrett, and Washington Counties) that fosters the physical, economic and social development of the region. The Council receives state financial support and planning assistance funds from the federal Economic Development Administration and the Appalachian Regional Commission to administer regional economic development programs. To facilitate planning, the Council studies regional resources; gathers and analyzes social and economic data; and joins with other government agencies, educational institutions, and private organizations in coordinating research. The Council's program for direct business assistance and enterprise development includes a Revolving Loan Fund program, Procurement and Export Assistance, and Data Center Services.
- **THE TRI-COUNTY COUNCIL FOR SOUTHERN MARYLAND** was formed in 1964 as a cooperative planning and development agency to foster the social and economic development of the Southern Maryland region (Charles, Calvert, and St. Mary's Counties). The Council provides a framework for cooperation and coordination among the elected, civic, and business leaders of the Region; undertakes action programs that focus local, State, and federal resources in a comprehensive strategy to enhance the quality of life of the Region; and initiates and coordinates projects which foster the physical, economic and social development of the Region. The FORVM sits on the steering committee of the Technology Task Force, TCCSMD's most recent project. The Tech Task Force has recently initiated work on the formulation of a *Technology Infrastructure Strategic Plan* that will ensure the development of broadband infrastructure in the Region. In addition, the TCCSMD has been very involved with efforts to promote agricultural development in the region, especially as it transitions out of tobacco production.

MARYLAND AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION & RURAL DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE FUND

Several rural-serving nonprofit organizations and community colleges have received another round of funding from the **Maryland Agricultural Education and Rural Development Assistance Fund** for FY 2002. The FORVM for Rural Maryland initiated the legislation during the 2000 legislative session and it passed that same year. MAE&RDAF is a grant fund set exclusively for rural-serving nonprofit organizations which promote statewide and regional planning, economic and community development, and agricultural/forestry education, as well as for community colleges that support small, natural resource based businesses through enhanced training and technical assistance offered by the Advanced Technology Centers.

During FY 2002, the FORVM and four of its partners -- the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Business and Economic Development, the Department of Housing and Community Development, and the Department of Natural Resources -- recommended 13 rural-serving nonprofit organizations receive \$346,000 in grants and the Board of Public Works approved them all.

The MAE&RDA Fund provides rural nonprofits with an important source of organizational funding, that is not generally available from the urban-focused philanthropic sector, but it assists them in leveraging non-state sources of funding, too. The Governor

Update From the Maryland General Assembly

TASK FORCE ON RESOURCE BASED INDUSTRIES

The FORVM provided staff support and technical assistance to the **Governor's Task Force on Resource Based Industries**, which was co-chaired by Senator Mac Middleton and Delegate Charles McClenahan. This Task Force was charged to study the challenges facing the State's agriculture, farming, fishing, and mineral extraction industries, which form the backbone of the economy in most rural areas. The Task Force was created in 2000 so that the feasibility of creating a new financing authority for these industries could be fully investigated. During the past year, The FORVM helped the Task Force secure funding and set parameters for conducting and completing a comprehensive, statewide needs assessment of resource-based industries. The final report was delivered to the Governor and the General Assembly and included the results of the needs assessment. The report also recommended that a new "Task Force on Resource Industry Business Development" be established to study the issues identified in the needs assessment report. More specifically, the Task Force would examine the current and anticipated economic development needs of resource-based industries and develop appropriate recommendations. Legislation establishing the new Task Force was passed, but was vetoed by the Governor (SB 735 and HB 849).

SMALL COMMUNITY WASTEWATER ISSUES

The FORVM provided a small community perspective to the **Governor's Task Force on Upgrading Sewerage Facilities** and provided that body with recommendations, which ensured that the rural perspective was considered in the task force's work. The FORVM provided the Task Force with a list of recommendations outlining how the State can better assist rural communities to deal with a serious wastewater collection system problem. (The Maryland Municipal League also strongly endorsed these recommendations.) These recommendations include two studies focusing on the "inflow and infiltration" problem facing many older communities as well as an assessment of the appropriate user rates charged by these communities. In addition, a further recommendation would target infrastructure improvement funding towards the most needy communities. Legislation concerning this was introduced and passed during the 2002 Session (SB 643 and HB 1051).

Senate Bill 643/House Bill 1051, as enacted, provides that these studies be done in the future — over a three year period beginning in FY 2004. However, during the final day of the legislative session, the General Assembly accelerated the implementation of these studies by providing \$1 million in the State's FY 2003 Capital Budget (SB 288).

The other piece of legislation that was passed, HB 659, establishes a Water Security and Wastewater Systems Advisory Council as well as an Interagency Technical Assistance Committee on Wastewater Treatment Systems. The Interagency Technical Assistance Committee, a recommendation stemming from the Task Force, will include representation from the following rural-focused organizations: the FORVM, the MD Rural Water Association, and USDA-Rural Development. MML, MACo and MD Environmental Service will also have seats on the Committee, as well the affected state agencies (MDP, DHCD, etc.) and a couple of environmental organizations. The Committee will offer technical assistance to smaller communities on the efficient operation and financing of their wastewater systems.



Arts & Entertainment District Program

The **Arts & Entertainment District Program** was established by the General Assembly in 2001 to designate Maryland communities as eligible to receive certain tax credits that would help neighborhood revitalization through concentrated arts and entertainment investments. This program, administered by DBED, has been recognized as the first in the nation to develop A&E Districts on a statewide basis.

The FORVM for Rural Maryland has served on the A&E District Designation Review Board and is pleased to report that several Rural Maryland communities have received A&E District designations over the past two years. They are listed below.

Cumberland A&E District

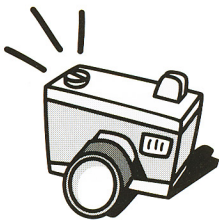
This A&E District encompasses the majority of downtown Cumberland as well as a large portion of the Canal Place Preservation District. The city plans to acquire and renovate property that lends itself to artist housing, studio, and retail space, which would serve as a model for new artist housing in the District.

Cambridge A&E District

Cambridge, the most recent designee for A&E District, is the first such designation on the Eastern Shore. Among the many attractive components that make up this District are the new Arts Center, Sailwinds Performance Center, the new Hyatt Resort, and a host of new arts related businesses opening up on Cambridge's Main Street.

Hagerstown A&E District

This A&E District's plan envisions the Maryland Theater as its keystone to an expanding area of public and private facilities devoted to arts and entertainment. Anchor entertainment attractions would create an environment to sustain art galleries, specialty retail shops and high-end restaurants.



**Total Maryland
Population:**
5,296,486

Total Rural Population:
(All 18 rural counties
including
Harford County)
1,478,686 or 28%

**Economically Distressed
Rural
Counties:** Allegany,
Garrett, Caroline,
Dorchester, Somerset &
Worcester.

**Somewhat Less Dis-
tressed Counties:** Cecil,
Kent, St. Mary's, Talbot,
Washington & Wicomico.

**Suburban Fringe Rural
Counties:** Calvert,
Carroll, Charles,
Frederick, Queen Anne's
& Harford.

The FORVM for
Rural Maryland
accepted a **National
Rural Impact Award**
in 2001 from the
National Rural
Development
Partnership, which
recognized the
FORVM for its work
in helping to
improve the quality
of life in Maryland's
rural communities.

THE FORVM FOR RURAL MARYLAND: Serving more than a Million Marylanders

**FORVM
FOR RURAL
MARYLAND**

Most Maryland residents live in the Baltimore and Washington, D.C. corridor, and many of the state's resources naturally go there. Yet about 1.4 million Maryland residents — more than a quarter of the state's population — live in the rural communities of the remote Appalachian Mountains, the economically challenged communities of the Eastern Shore and areas of Southern Maryland. Of the 14 jurisdictions in the state with median household incomes below the state average, 12 are rural. The other two are Baltimore City and Baltimore County.

The Story of Four Marylands

Prior to 1950, Maryland's rural economies were vital to the state's stability and economic prosperity, providing cash crops, minerals, timber and finished goods to a growing national marketplace. Half of all Maryland residents lived in rural counties, and Cumberland was the second largest city in the state.

Between 1950 and 1970, however, technological displacement, plant closures and changes in global markets resulted in chronic unemployment and economic decline in Rural Maryland. (Cumberland's population declined from 39,463 people in 1950 to just 21,518 today.) At the same time, service sector employment in federal government related industries grew, and bedroom communities appeared in concentric circles around Washington, D.C. and Baltimore. Interstate highways and commuter mass transit appeared to support an increasingly suburban lifestyle.

Many rural communities, however, became isolated from these job markets and employment opportunities. These residents lived where they worked, but as jobs became scarce, their communities declined. Today, the demographic statistics indicate that four Marylands have emerged.

One: Thriving Suburban Metro Counties, which include Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Howard, Montgomery and Prince George's.

Two: Economically Distressed Urban Cities, which include Baltimore City and certain areas inside the Baltimore and Washington beltways.

Three: Growing Suburban Fringe Rural Counties, comprised of Calvert, Carroll, Charles, Frederick, Harford and Queen Anne's. These counties have a lot of residential development, but agriculture and resource-based industries are still important to the economy and culture. They also have reasonable access to health care and other vital services.

Four: Economically Challenged Rural Counties, such as Allegany, Garrett, Caroline, Dorchester, Somerset and Worcester, which are designated as "distressed" by the state because they consistently demonstrate unemployment rates exceeding 150 percent of the statewide average. These entrenched patterns of joblessness are in sharp contrast to the rest of Maryland's long booming economy. Less distressed rural counties include Cecil, Kent, St. Mary's, Talbot, Washington and Wicomico.

One Maryland:

A Vision for a Better Future Statewide

In 1999, House Speaker Casper Taylor, Jr. introduced his landmark One Maryland legislation, an attempt to eliminate, or at least vastly reduce, the disparities between the state's non-suburban and suburban communities. The One Maryland initiative called for coordinated community mobilization, special infrastructure investments and business incentives to assist distressed communities in rural and urban areas. The FORVM operates in the spirit of One Maryland to improve the quality of life for more than a million Maryland residents who do not live in the major population centers of our state.

Poverty in Rural Maryland

These poverty rates represent the Census Bureau's "best" estimate; however, the range provides both low and high estimates. Based on statistical modeling, the Census Bureau estimates with 90 percent confidence that the actual percentage of people in poverty falls within this range. The rural counties are in bold.

<u>Jurisdiction</u>	<u>Poverty Rate</u>	<u>Range</u>
Baltimore City	23.7%	(18.3 to 29.1)
Somerset	21.8%	(16.5 to 27.2)
Allegany	15.9%	(12.2 to 19.5)
Garrett	15.8%	(12.1 to 19.4)
Dorchester	15.5%	(12.0 to 19.1)
Wicomico	13.5%	(10.4 to 16.6)
Caroline	12.8%	(9.8 to 15.7)
Worcester	11.9%	(9.2 to 14.6)
Kent	10.7%	(8.1 to 13.2)
Washington	10.1%	(7.9 to 12.4)
Talbot	9.7%	(7.5 to 11.9)
State:	9.5%	(8.5 to 10.5)
Prince Geo.	9.3%	(7.2 to 11.3)
Cecil	9.0%	(6.9 to 11)
St. Mary s	8.8%	(6.7 to 10.8)
Baltimore Co.	7.6%	(5.9 to 9.3)
Queen Anne s	7.5%	(5.8 to 9.3)
Charles	7.4%	(5.6 to 9.1)
Calvert	6.6%	(5 to 8.2)
Harford	6.4%	(4.9 to 7.8)
Frederick	5.8%	(4.5 to 7.1)
Montgomery	5.6%	(4.3 to 6.8)
Anne Arundel	5.3%	(4.1 to 6.5)
Carroll	4.9%	(3.7 to 6.1)
Howard	4.4%	(3.4 to 5.4)

Counties with Median Household Income Below the State Average

State Median: \$58,500

Cecil	\$57,600
Baltimore County	\$54,350
Talbot	\$45,650
Washington	\$44,450
Worcester	\$43,150
Wicomico	\$41,750
Kent	\$41,750
Caroline	\$41,550
Dorchester	\$37,700
Garrett	\$34,700
Baltimore City	\$33,700
Allegany	\$33,300
Somerset	\$32,700

Of Maryland's 24 jurisdictions, 13 (above) had median household incomes below the state average in 2001. Of those, 11 (in bold) are rural communities. (Figures prepared by the Maryland Department of Planning, Oct. 2002.)

Educational Attainment

This table shows the percent of residents over age 25 who graduated high school or have a bachelor's degree. Source: Maryland Department of Business & Economic Development.

<u>Jurisdiction</u>	<u>High School Graduate Or Higher</u>	<u>Bachelors Degree Or Higher</u>	<u>Jurisdiction</u>	<u>High School Graduate Or Higher</u>	<u>Bachelors Degree Or Higher</u>
Allegany	71.0	11.8	Harford	81.6	21.5
Anne Arundel	81.1	24.6	Howard	91.1	46.9
Baltimore City	60.7	15.5	Kent	71.4	16.9
Baltimore Co.	78.4	25.0	Montgomery	91.6	59.2
Calvert	79.3	17.6	Prince Georges	83.2	25.5
Caroline	66.8	10.8	Queen Anne s	76.8	19.9
Carroll	78.5	19.6	St. Mary s	77.1	16.8
Cecil	72.2	12.1	Somerset	61.2	9.6
Charles	81.0	16.2	Talbot	76.5	23.0
Dorchester	64.7	10.9	Washington	69.3	11.4
Frederick	80.4	22.0	Wicomico	72.1	8.5
Garrett	64.8	9.5	Worcester	70.8	14.8
			Statewide	85.7	32.3

Unemployment Rates

<u>County</u>	<u>2002 Avg</u>
Montgomery	3.1%
Charles	3.1%
Calvert	3.1%
Howard	3.3%
St. Mary s	3.3%
Frederick	3.4%
Carroll	3.4%
Prince Georges	3.5%
Queen Anne s	3.7%
Talbot	3.9%
Anne Arundel	4.1%
Kent	4.7%
Harford	4.8%
State Average	5.0%
Caroline	5.2%
Baltimore Co.	5.3%
Washington	5.4%
Wicomico	6.2%
Cecil	6.3%
Allegany	7.9%
Somerset	8.2%
Garrett	8.7%
Baltimore City	8.8%
Dorchester	10.6%
Worcester	11.2%

Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation, 2002

FORVM FOR RURAL MARYLAND

Maryland's Rural Development Council

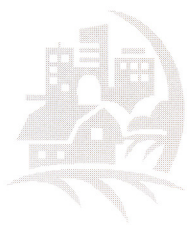
Statement of Principles

As a collaborative partnership, the FORVM shall be established and operated in a nonpartisan and nondiscriminatory manner. Policymakers and managers from stakeholding agencies and organizations at all levels of government and the private sector are valued participants in FORVM activities. Where practical, the decision-making undertaken by the FORVM will ordinarily be made by reaching consensus.

Major Goals

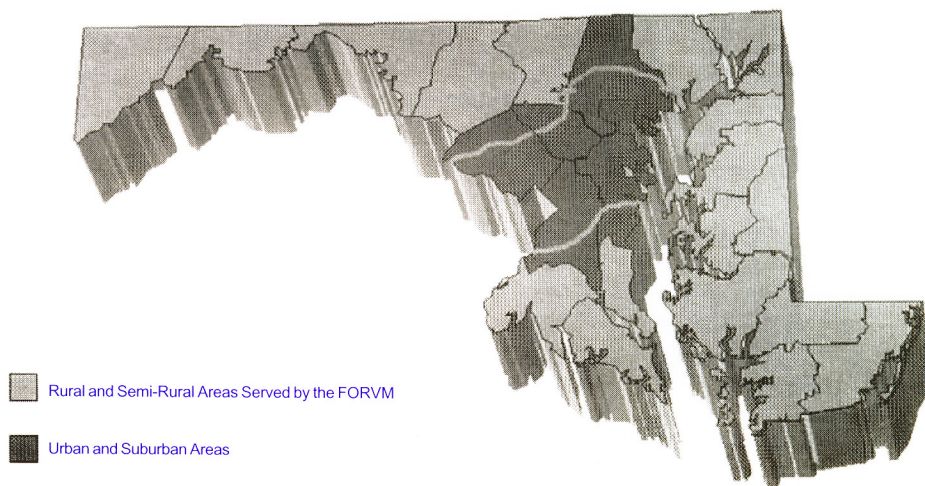
- ◆ Enable citizens in rural communities to achieve success in employment and have access to quality, affordable health care, and other services.
- ◆ Preserve agriculture and other natural resource-based industries as an integral part of Maryland's rural economy and culture.
- ◆ Advocate for a manageable regulatory process and reasonable and effective compliance.
- ◆ Address the impact of changing conditions on the environment, heritage and economic well being of rural Marylanders.

Our Mission



The mission for the FORVM is to build a bright future for Rural Maryland by helping to address its unique concerns. The FORVM works toward achieving effective solutions by bringing together the diverse partnerships necessary to collectively work to improve the quality of life for Rural Maryland.

Maryland's Rural and Semi-Rural Areas



A Collective Voice for Building a Brighter Future

To add your voice and partner with us, please contact:

The FORVM for Rural Maryland

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